

ACCESS



AMERICA

The Dream is Alive

Remembering the Civil Rights Movement and the legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

In 1964, in recognition of his work and leadership, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway. Accepting the award on behalf of the civil rights movement, Dr. King said, "Sooner or later, all the people of the world will have to discover a way to live together in peace, and

thereby transform this pending cosmic elegy into a creative psalm of brotherhood."

King continued working to integrate housing, jobs and schools to make the dream of racial equality a reality. In March 1965, he led a celebrated 87-kilometer march from Selma, Alabama, to Montgomery in the face of hostility from state officials and attacks by white

"Freedom is not free." —MLK

Southerners to dramatize the need for a federal voting rights bill. This landmark legislation, the Voting Rights Act, was passed by Congress in 1965. It permitted federal examiners to register voters in localities where discrimination had occurred. In

subsequent years, black voting in the South—and the numbers of black elected officials—increased enormously.

A year later, James Meredith, the first black to enter the University of Mississippi, was wounded during a lone march across the state of Mississippi. King immediately went to Mississippi and, joined by hundreds of others, completed Meredith's march. In Mississippi, King faced a split in the ranks of the civil rights

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From the Director

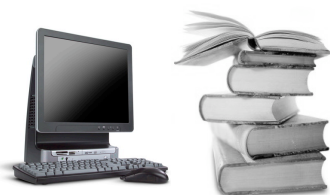
The United States of America was founded "by men of many nations and backgrounds. It was founded on the principle that all men are created equal, and that the rights of every man are diminished when the rights of one man are threatened." With this call to Americans to remember their consciences and values, President John F. Kennedy launched a process of self-examination and fundamental reforms to guarantee the right of equality for all Americans. He believed, as did the great civil rights leader, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., that equality is a universal right for all people.

America has made great strides since its early days, and even greater progress during and since the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. But American society, like all societies, is a work in progress, and we still have work to do to transform our ideals into reality.

With this new monthly American Center newsletter, replacing the quarterly Center News, we invite you to participate in an ongoing exploration of American culture, society and values.

—Patricia Kabra





IRC Tips

In light of this month's topic, here are some selected internet resources on civil rights and race relations in America from the experts in the Information Resource Center:

- Affirmative Action and Diversity Project
<http://humanitas.ucsb.edu/aa.html>
- Civil Rights Oral History Interviews: Spokane, Washington
<http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/holland/masc/xcivilrights.html>
- Civil Rights Movement Veterans
<http://www.crmvet.org/>
- Integrating Ole Miss: A Civil Rights Milestone
<http://www.jfklibrary.org/meredith/>
- School Desegregation
<http://www.edweek.org/context/topics/deseg.htm>
- U.S. Census Race Data
<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/race.html>
- U.S. Commission on Civil Rights
<http://www.usccr.gov/>
- U.S. Dept. of Justice: Civil Rights Division
<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/>
- We Shall Overcome: Historic Places of the Civil Rights Movement
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/travel/civilrights/>

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movement as younger, more militant members first raised the cry of "black power" and rejected his philosophy of non-violence. Despite this shift toward militancy on the part of black groups in the late 1960s, King never wavered in his commitment to the principles and practice of nonviolence to achieve his aims of social justice and human dignity.

With the successful implementation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, King increasingly devoted his time to the issue of poverty in the United States. He began to organize a "Poor People's March on Washington" to dramatize the need for jobs, education and better living conditions for the nation's poor. Tragically, on April 4, 1968, he was assassinated by a sniper as he stood on a balcony in Memphis, Tennessee, where he had gone to support a strike of sanitation workers.

It was in recognition of King's prodigious achievements that, on November 2, 1983, President Ronald Reagan signed a bill making the third Monday in January a federal holiday in

honor of the birth of Dr. King. For the first time, the nation honors a black American; the dream is alive and shaping the destiny of the country.

Responding to the president at the signing ceremony establishing the federal holiday, Coretta Scott King, now director of the Martin Luther King Center for Nonviolent Social Change, said:

In his own life's example, he symbolized what was right about America, what was noblest and best, what human beings have pursued since the beginning of history. He loved unconditionally. He was in constant pursuit of truth, and when he discovered it, he embraced it. His nonviolent campaigns brought about redemption, reconciliation and justice. He taught us that only peaceful means can bring about peaceful ends, that our goal was to create the love community."

Excerpted from "The Dream Is Alive" by Gary A. Puckrein, publisher of the Smithsonian Institution magazine of Afro-American culture American Visions, in The Civil Rights Movement and the Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., Office of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State, 1998.

FILMS AT THE AMERICAN CORNER IN JANUARY



5 Friday	3:00 p.m.	My Fair Lady
12 Friday	3:00 p.m.	The Fellowship of the Ring
15 Sunday	12:00 p.m.	I Have a dream
	3:00 p.m.	MLK: A Man of Peace
	5:00 p.m.	MLK: The Assassin Years
19 Friday	3:00 p.m.	The Two Towers
26 Friday	3:00 p.m.	The Return of King

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Alumni Spotlight

Name: Hanen Keskes

Program: Youth Exchange and Study (YES) 2005 – 2006

Home in Tunisia: Tunis

U.S. exchange location.: Ontario, California

Fondest memory of the U.S.: Going on a summer retreat with the youth group with my host family's church to Big Bear Lake in southern California.

Most important lesson learned: Appreciate people and respect them for who they are and what they believe, and also

be proud of myself for who I am

Advice for other potential participants: Please be yourself and know that you're not perfect and that even though some people might do things a different way, that doesn't mean that they're wrong

What I will miss about the U.S.: My group of five wonderful girl friends from school that I used to hang out with the whole time. They were the coolest, nicest and smartest people ever, and they were the hardest people to say goodbye to. We actually still write each other all the time via e-mail, snail mail and MySpace.

My U.S. experience: I stayed in Ontario, California with the Swagers. They had 5 kids aged from 15 to 26, except that the girl aged 26 moved out before I went to live with them. I shared a room with a German exchange student. I went to Chino Hills High School, a big school with about 3,000 students. I was a senior and, except for English and U.S. history, I only took fun classes such as cooking, theatre, guitar and Spanish. Not that my English class wasn't fun or anything...I loved Mr. Acker, my English teacher, and he was the head of the fencing club that I was in too. I went to church with my host family every Sunday (they were Protestant) and had good times with the youth group. On weekends, I enjoyed watching movies with my host brothers, going out with my friends and playing guitar.

Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence Program

The Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence Program is seeking a professor of Arabic language and Arabic literature in translation for a 2007-2008 academic year placement at Norfolk State University in Norfolk, Virginia. Candidates must be able to lecture fluently in English, and preference is given to individuals with a doctoral degree in their field who have not previously been Fulbright grantees. Applications must be received by **15 February 2007**.

Youth Summer Leadership Institute

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) Youth Summer Leadership Institute is seeking undergraduates for a six-week intensive leadership training program in the U.S. from July 5-August 19, 2007. Applicants must be Tunisian citizens or residents in the first or second year of university, 18-21 years old, proficient in English and strongly interested in the United States. Applications are available at <http://tunis.usembassy.gov> and are **due by January 31, 2007**.

For more information on either of these programs, please contact Fouzia Ben Kheder, Cultural Affairs Specialist for Exchanges, at 71-107-438 or benkhederf@state.gov.

DVCs for Learning

The American Center is promoting “Digital Video Conferencing for Learning” to encourage a lively exchange of views between Tunisian scholars and students and their American counterparts on a variety of educational and cultural topics. Digital videoconference (DVC) technology enhances cross-cultural awareness between Tunisians and Americans through live discussions carried out in real time despite having interlocutors continents apart.

We invite faculty, students, academic institutions and other interested parties to send ideas for DVCs to be hosted on the premises of the U.S. Embassy. While most DVCs are limited to one hour, the debate among the group can continue afterwards, including via web chats, blogs and a sustained networking effort.

As we approach Martin Luther King Day, we are thrilled to present a digital videoconference titled, “Legal accomplishments of the Civil Rights Movement” on January 24, a great opportunity to learn more about a movement that changed the course of U.S. history.

To participate in this program and for more information, or to suggest another possible program, please contact English Teaching Program Assistant Sami Saaied at 71-107-259 or saaieds@state.gov. Let's continue to learn and share!

January Events

13 Friday 6:00 p.m.

American Corner

Photo exhibit opening, “The USA as seen by Nader Ayadi,” 2005 Summer MEPI Program participant (until January 27)

24 Wednesday 3:30 p.m.

U.S. Embassy

DVC, “Legal accomplishments of the Civil Rights Movement”
RSVP required. Please contact Sami Saaied using the contact details at left.

See also the American Corner film schedule on page 2!

*American Corner at AMIDEAST
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